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IN THE DRAWINGS:

The attached two sheets of drawings includes proposed changes to Figures 2A-2D. Figures 2A-2D on the two drawing sheets have been designated "PRIOR ART". Upon approval by the Examiner, formal drawing sheets will be promptly forwarded.

REMARKS

I. Status Summary

Claims 1-9 are pending in the present application. Claims 1 and 9 have been amended. Claims 2 and 7 have been canceled. New Claim 10 has been added. Therefore, upon entry of this Amendment, Claims 1, 3-6, and 8-10 will be pending. No new matter has been introduced by the present amendment. Reconsideration of the application as amended and based on the arguments set forth hereinbelow is respectfully requested.

II. Specification

The Examiner has provided guidelines describing a preferred layout for the specification of a utility patent application. (Official Action, page 2.) The Examiner has suggested that the use of the guidelines by applicants. (Official Action, page 2.) Applicants respectfully direct the Examiner to the amendments to the specification made in the Preliminary Amendment filed with the subject application. The specification amendments include adding section headings for clarifying and setting apart the various sections of the subject application. Applicants respectfully submit that the various sections of the subject application are labeled and distinguished as suggested by 37 C.F.R. § 1.77(b).

The Examiner objected to the disclosure of the subject application because of a period missing at page 1, line 3. (Official Action, page 5.) Applicants respectfully submit that lines 3 and 4 include the title of the subject application. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the objection to the disclosure should be withdrawn.

III. Drawings

The Examiner stated that Figures 2A-2D should be designated by a legend such as "Prior Art" because only that which is old is illustrated. (Official Action, page 5.) Figures 2A-2D have been designated "PRIOR ART" in red ink in the revised drawings attached hereto. Therefore, applicants submit that Figures 2A-2D have been properly labeled as prior art. Upon approval by the Examiner of the proposed drawing changes, formal drawings will be promptly submitted by applicants.

IV. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

The Examiner stated that there is insufficient antecedent basis for the feature "the end point identification" recited by Claim 9. (Official Action, page 6.) The Examiner also stated that Claim 9 should depend from either Claim 4 or Claim 6. (Official Action, page 6.) Claim 9 has been amended to depend from Claim 4. Therefore, applicants respectfully submit that the feature "the end point identification" now has proper antecedent basis and that the rejection should be withdrawn.

V. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1, 4, 6, and 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,074,954 to Lill et al. (hereinafter, "Lill"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants note that the Examiner has indicated that Claims 2, 3, 5, and 7 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any

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intervening claim. (Official Action, page 9.) Applicants have amended Claim 1 to include the features of Claim 2 in accordance with the Examiner's suggestion for obtaining allowance of Claim 1. Therefore, applicants submit that Claim 1 should be patentable over the cited reference.

Claims 4, 6, and 8 depend from amended Claim 1. Therefore, for the reasons provided above, applicants submit that Claims 4, 6, and 8 should be patentable over the cited reference and should be allowed.

VI. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner has rejected Claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lill in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,635,573 to Pau et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants note that the Examiner has indicated that Claims 2, 3, 5, and 7 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claim. (Official Action, page 9.) Applicants have amended Claim 1 to include the features of Claim 2 in accordance with the Examiner's suggestion. Claim 9 depends from base Claim 1. Therefore, applicants submit that Claim 9 should also be patentable over the cited reference and should be allowed.

VII. Allowable Claims

As noted above, the Examiner has indicated that Claims 2, 3, 5, and 7 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if

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rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claim. (Official Action, page 9.) As stated above, applicants have amended Claim 1 to include the features of Claim 2. Therefore, applicants respectfully submit that Claim 1 should now be formally allowed.

In addition, applicants have added new Claim 10 including the features recited in original Claim 1 and Claim 7. Therefore, applicants respectfully submit that new Claim 10 should now be formally allowed.

CONCLUSION

In light of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is now in proper condition for allowance, and an early notice to such effect is earnestly solicited.

If any small matter should remain outstanding after the Patent Examiner has had an opportunity to review the above Remarks, the Patent Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned patent attorney in order to resolve these matters and avoid the issuance of another Official Action.

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DEPOSIT ACCOUNT

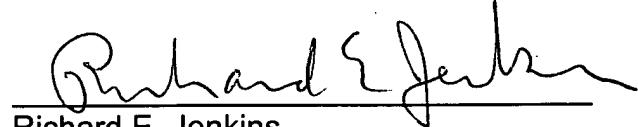
The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees associated with the filing of this correspondence to Deposit Account No. 50-0426.

Respectfully submitted,

JENKINS, WILSON & TAYLOR, P.A.

Date: September 28, 2004

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REJ/BJO/gwc

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